

Top Secret



DIRECTORATE OF
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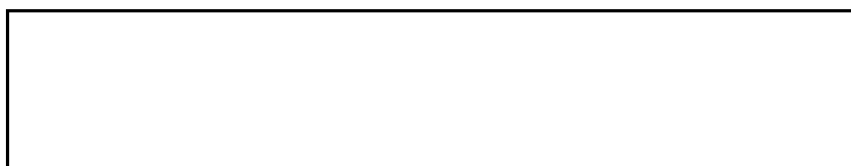
PANAMA: Followers of deposed president Arias are plotting again. (Page 3)

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PANAMA: Followers of deposed president Arias are again plotting to overthrow the Torrijos government.

25X1 Their efforts are being coordinated by Abraham Crocomo, a former National Guard officer who arrived [redacted] in the Canal Zone in late February. Crocomo's plans reportedly are in an advanced stage, and he claims to have gained support within the Guard, including the air force unit. [redacted]

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25X1 [redacted] the government is aware of plotting within the Guard; some arrests have already been made.

As in the past, the combination of government vigilance and the plotters' ineptitude will probably frustrate any coup attempt. Nevertheless, the possibility of an assassination attempt against General Torrijos or Colonel Noriega, the intelligence chief, cannot be discounted. Even an abortive coup attempt could create problems for the US, as was the case in 1970 when another Arias aide fled to the zone after trying to overthrow the government.

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CARIBBEAN: An effort to establish direct ties among various black power and other radical groups was made in Martinique early last month.

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West Indians from Martinique and several other islands attended the meeting, which ostensibly was held to discuss social science teaching techniques but actually was dominated by Marxist and black militancy themes. Agreement was reached on setting up a steering committee to organize a formal linkup among Caribbean radicals using academic research institutes as a cover for their activities. If the effort proceeds beyond the incipient stage, it could pave the way for the sort of regional movement that the area's many disparate black radical groups have thus far been unable to create.

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